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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [NO](#)
SUBJECT: NORWAY POSITIVE ON NATO REQUEST FOR ISAF FORCES
AND TRAINERS: OFFICIAL NATO REQUEST NEEDED TO GET TELEMAR
BATTALION

REF: A. A: SECSTATE 71547

[1](#)B. B:OSLO DAO IIR 6 872 0058 07 "ASK NOW FOR FEB 08
DEPLOYMENT"

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Kevin M Johnson
for reasons 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C) Embassy delivered reftel A points to Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requesting that Norway provide two OMLTs, 15 trainers for CSTC-A and fill the remaining billets committed to ISAF HQ. Embassy also raised the issue of sending the Telemark battalion to Afghanistan in [1](#)2008. MOD contacts did not want to respond explicitly but implied that the requests for trainers and OMLT teams would be answered positively at the June Ministerial. They stated that they were working with Ministry of Justice to determine the level of police participation in Norway's potential contributions to CSTC-A. Both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs felt that fulfilling these commitments would not be a matter of political debate as they were not large additional deployments. Deploying the Telemark battalion is a different matter and would be a controversial political move.

[1](#)2. (C) As described in reftel B, Embassy Oslo, and certain members of Norway's Ministry of Defense have long advocated a formal request from NATO for Norway to send the Telemark battalion to Afghanistan. The Norwegian Telemark Battalion, which is currently committed to NATO's NRF 8, will come off that commitment in July 0f 2007. It will spend the rest of 2007 re-equipping and training. It would be available at the earliest in February 2008, although it is more likely that it would be available in late 2008. This is due to the time needed to prepare the battalion and perhaps more importantly, to lay the necessary political groundwork for the government to approve any such deployment. Norwegian defense officials are in favor of a deployment and privately have suggested that a formal NATO request would help the Minister of Defense and the CHOD make the case for such a deployment within the government.

[1](#)3. (C) MOD leadership has been arguing within the government that Norway will eventually need to deploy the Telemark battalion to Afghanistan to remain in good standing within the alliance. MOD would prefer an earlier, rather than later deployment as it would then have the best opportunity to work with traditional allies such as the UK, US, the Netherlands and Denmark. Norwegian MOD officials tell us that the UK requests the Telemark battalion about once a month but that it will take a NATO request to make the government start considering such a deployment. A decision to deploy the Telemark battalion would be a major political issue once announced and it would take a concerted effort by the

government to convince their Socialist Left coalition partners to accept such a step. Embassy will continue to advocate the deployment of the Telemark battalion but it will be NATO pressure that will ultimately have the greatest effect on the government's decision makers.
Johnson